



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

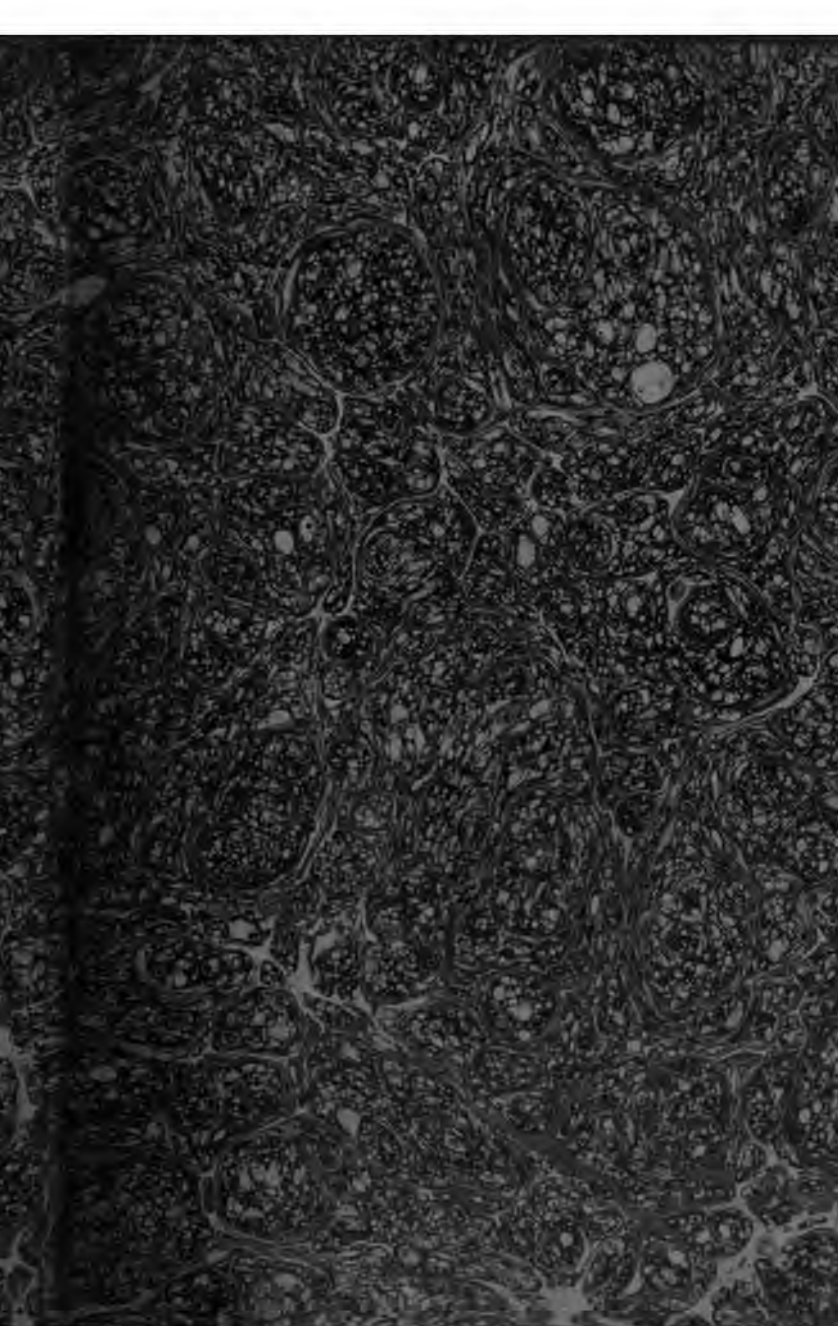
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

BODLEIAN LIBRARY

The gift of

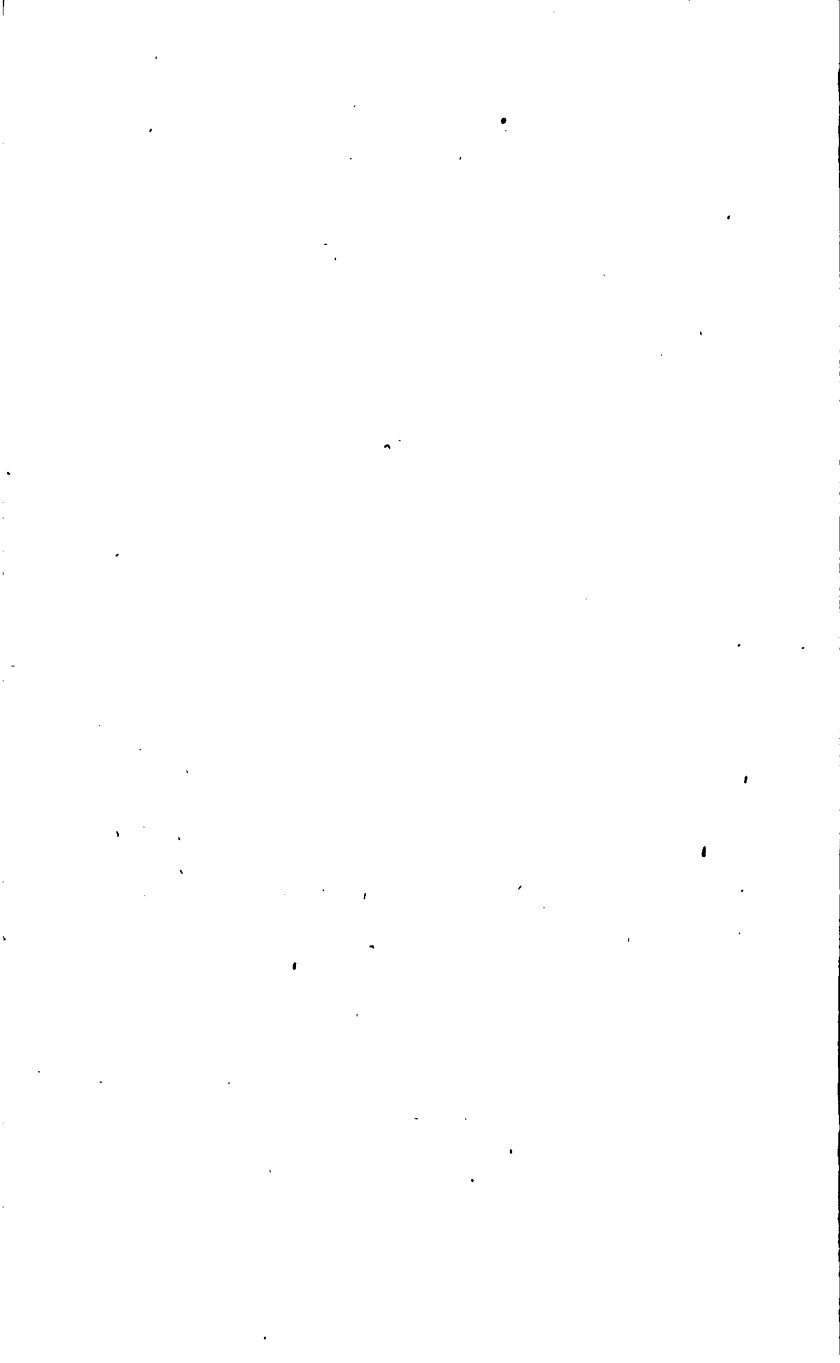
Miss Emma F. I. Dunston



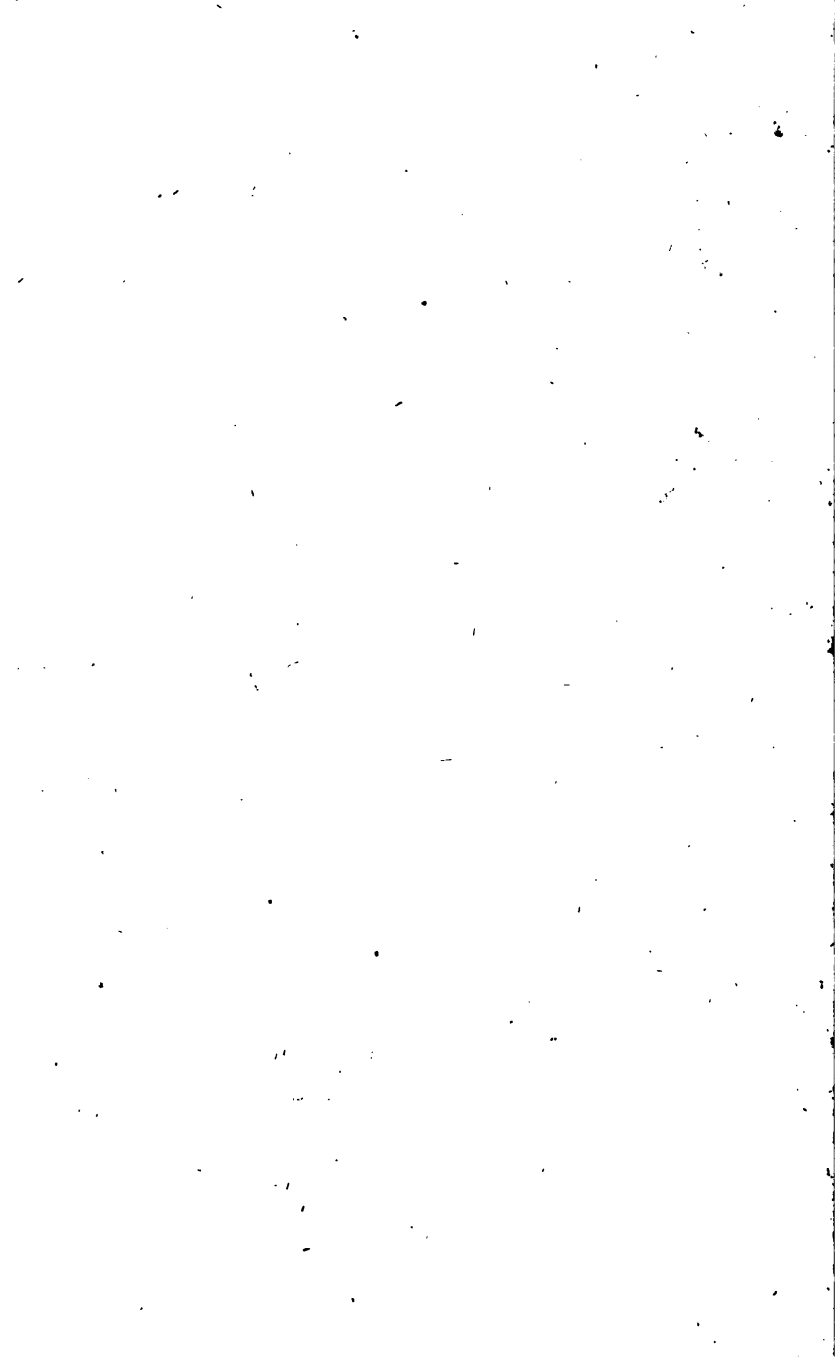
8/

Dunston C72a

23







CHEVY CHASE,

A POEM.

FOUNDED ON

The Ancient Ballad.

WITH OTHER POEMS.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR CADELL & DAVIES, STRAND; J. & A. ARCH,
CORNHILL; HAYWARD & ROSCOE, ORANGE STREET, RED
LION SQUARE; W. BLACKWOOD, EDINBURGH; AND W.
ROBINSON & SONS, LIVERPOOL.

1820.



P R E F A C E.

THE ancient heroic ballad of Chevy Chase has long been an universal favourite. The union which it presents of the sports of the field with the more striking incidents of warfare, the personal nature of the quarrel which leads to the catastrophe, the celebrity of its principal characters, and the domestic scene of its transactions, all contribute to give it a degree of interest far superior to that excited by most productions of a similar kind.

But independent of these considerations, a poem which for so many centuries has been the delight of the British nation, which is repeated by infancy, and retained in age, and which has equal attractions for

all ranks of society, must have a considerable degree of poetical merit. It is this that obtained for it the high approbation of Sir Philip Sydney, who declared "that he never heard the old song of Percie and Douglas that he found not his heart moved more than with a trumpet;" and that induced Addison to devote two of his Spectators to a critical examination of its beauties, in which he has raised it to the rank of an English Epic, and compared it with the celebrated productions of Greece and Rome.

It must not, however, be understood, that the approbation thus expressed by these eminent men, was applied to the same composition. Addison was mistaken in attributing the language of Sir Philip Sydney to the modern ballad of Chevy Chase, of which he has himself given a critique. It might indeed have occurred to him that the poem which engaged his attention was not so obsolete in its language as to have been considered even in the reign of Elizabeth, as "evil apparelled in the dust and cobweb of an uncivill age." It is to Dr. Percy, the

Editor of the Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, that we are indebted for the recovery, or at least for the republication, of the original poem which moved the heart of Sir Philip Sydney, though "sung by some blind crowder with no rougher voice than rude style;" and which induces him to ask "what it would work trimmed in the gorgeous eloquence of Pindare?"

It is not indeed improbable, as Dr. Percy conjectures, that the modern ballad was written in consequence of the eulogium of Sir Philip Sydney upon the ancient poem. At all events he is not inclined to consider it as of higher antiquity than the time of Elizabeth, whilst he has given sufficient reasons to presume, that the antient ballad cannot be placed later than the time of Henry VI.; "as on the other hand, the mention of James, the Scottish king, forbids us to assign it an earlier date."

That a contest between the two powerful border nobles, similar to that described in the poem actu-

ally occurred, may reasonably be conjectured, although the particular circumstances attending it are not authenticated by any historical records; unless we should consider it as having taken its origin from the Battle of Otterbourne, and been written subsequent to the Ballad on that subject, to which it bears a strong resemblance. However this may be, much must have been left to the invention of the writer to describe as he might think fit. Of this liberty the authors of the ballads have freely availed themselves, nor has the writer of the second thought himself bound to adhere very closely to the authority of the first. The early poem bears indeed much stronger marks of authenticity than the modern imitation. The circumstances are more strongly conceived, and more clearly described. It displays a greater air of sincerity and a deeper feeling, and at the same time it is free from several mistakes and anachronisms which appear in the more modern work.

In some respects, the following attempt to mo-

dernize this ancient and favourite poem will be found materially to differ from the original ballad. One of the circumstances that seems to have contributed greatly to its interest, is the representation it gives of a kind of sylvan war, in which the hilarity of the sports of the field is interrupted and terminated by a serious and destructive battle.—I have therefore availed myself of the opportunity thus afforded, of describing the preparations for the expedition, and the pleasures of the Chase, at some length; and for this part of my attempt, as I owe little to my predecessors, so I cannot plead their example as my excuse. That discrimination of character in the principal leaders, which is but slightly indicated in the ancient ballads, I have endeavoured to draw forth, as far as the brief nature of such a poem will admit; nor has it escaped my observation, that those ballads are indebted for a great portion of the high estimation in which they are held, to the generous sentiments which, amidst the heat and animosity of national and individual rivalry, are occasionally displayed by the two chieftains, and

which, although I am aware that they cannot be improved upon, I have done all in my power to preserve.

There are two points in which I have deviated from the original ballad, which may require some explanation. The time, which in the latter comprises only a single day, is extended to two days; and the part which Witherington acts in breaking off the single combat between the Earls, is transferred to Sir Hugh Montgomery. There is the less occasion for apology, with regard to the extension of the time, as the modernized ballad is guilty of a great oversight in this respect, which is not found in the ancient one. The former narrates,

“ This fight did last from break of day

“ To setting of the sun.”

Although it has before described the Hunt as taking place in the forenoon of the same day.—It would have been quite correct if it had followed the ancient copy, which very consistently says,

" This battell began in Cheviat

" An owar befor the none,

" And when evensong bell was rung

" The battell was nat half done.

" They took on, on ethar hand

" By the light of the moon ;" &c.

The fight, according to the latter, which nearly agrees in this respect with the circumstances of the Battle of Otterbourne, was begun at noon and continued by moonlight. But as the battle is the principal feature of the poem, and as the hunting of the one baron, and the journey of the other, may be reasonably supposed to occupy one day, it seemed preferable to postpone the final meeting, and the decision of the quarrel, to the following morning. The interference, too, of a chieftain of influence and reputation, accounts more satisfactorily than that of a simple attendant, for the disobedience of the vassals in interrupting the duel between their lords; and from the nature of the arms which the

two parties carried, it is more honourable and manly that this chieftain should be a Scot than an Englishman. An attack from the English archers would have been insidious and cowardly, as many of the enemy must have perished before they had notice of hostilities, whereas the advance of the spearmen was of itself a sufficient warning to their antagonists.

With these exceptions, I have adhered as strictly as possible to the facts and words of the ballad.

CHEVY CHASE.

THE DEPARTURE.

O'ER covert green and tufted oak
The first faint beam of morning broke ;
On every vale and woodland dell
Its dewy lustre softly fell ;
And, startled at the glimpse of dawn,
The fleet hart bounded o'er the lawn,
Midst thorny brake and tangled bow'r,
To linger till the ev'ning hour.
But yellow broom and holly green
Not long shall shelter him, I ween,
Beneath their shadows, cool and dark,
From the hoarse stag-hound's echoing bark,

That soon with clamorous note shall rouse
The herded red-deer, as they browse,
Or at those clear streams drink their fill,
That murmur down the Cheviot Hill.

On Alnwick's walls the day-beams shone,
And massy turrets, ivy-grown ;
Yet thro' the casement's narrow space
Scarce stole one faint and early trace,
Athwart that mighty depth of wall,
To light the gloom of Percy's hall.
But glanc'd that beam on Percy's brow,
When sunk in peaceful slumber ? No !
Ere this, to hunt the Scottish deer,
The Earl had grasp'd his ashen spear ;
His good yew-bow behind was slung,
And loud his crowded quiver rung,
As firmly to his manly side
His staunch and sturdy blade he tied,
And now before his castle gate,
In pride of feudal pomp and state,
Impatient for their Lords command,
Full thrice five hundred vassals stand :

Horsemen approv'd and archers true,
And hunters gay, a gallant crew ;
And lightly clad in garb of green,
The prickers of the deer were seen,
From Alswick, and from Allondale,
From Belford, Blythe, and Morpeth's vale,
And Tyne's romantic banks that came,
All merry rousers of the game.

Whose is yea stand, whose haughty bound
Scarce deigns to touch the echoing ground,
On whose dark coat his gleaming eyes
Seem meteors in the midnight skies,
Whom two tall grooms with tighten'd rein,
And triple curb-chain scarce restrain ?
One stately form alone, I guess,
That courser's stubborn loins may press ;
And now impatient stands he there
The princely Parry's weight to bear ;
Whilst closely thronging all around,
Howls in the tumult many a hound ;
The savage wolf-dog, gaunt and grim,
Of aspect stern, and strong of limb ;

The vigorous stag-hound's long array,
Sure in the chase and bold at bay;
And those that urge the wily hare,
Harrier and beagle—all were there.

Have I not number'd in my song
One dog, the chiefest of the throng?
Shame were it to the idle lays
That, generous Luath, sunk thy praise:
Thy lofty mien, thy matchless force,
Thy speed, unequall'd in the course,
Thy faithful zeal, thy courage tried,
Had made thee long the Percy's pride.
He lov'd thy form; for, Luath, thine
Was trac'd in beauty's favorite line;
The keenness of thy tapering face,
Thy slender body's arching grace,
Bespoke thee best and first in fame
Of all that bore the grey-hound's name.

In silken jesses held, and hood,
On many a wrist the falcon stood;
Or screaming o'er the busy field
Around his master slowly wheel'd.

With russet wing and beak of blue,
The fierce Gyr-falcon leaves his mew,
Whose fearless heart and eagle size
Dispute the empire of the skies.
Scarce heard amid the various yell,
The Gentil chimes his silver bell;
And hardest spoiler of the air,
Tho' smallest, cower'd the Merlin there.

Hark! from the universal crew
That sudden cheer and loud halloo;
And the clear bugle's merry peal,
And frequent clash of martial steel,
And the hot charger's piercing neigh,
And the hound's deep redoubled bay,
And hawks, whose silver chime-bells ring
To their shrill shriek and sounding wing.
Scarce may the leashes now restrain,
The struggling hounds that throng the plain;
That crouching round his honour'd feet,
With fawning love their master greet;
And high yon steed his dark main throws,
As forth the stout Earl Percy goes.

To horse ! to horse !—mov'd man and steed
With hurrying haste and eager speed ;
While Percy, clad in arms complete,
Sprung lightly to his saddle-seat,
Check'd his proud chargers angry course,
And summon'd loud—' To horse ! to horse !
' Already dawns the morning ray,
' And Scottish woods lie far away ;
' Where I, three summer days, have sworn
' To drive the deer with hound and horn,
' And range their hills from morn to night,
' In Scotland's, and Earl Douglas' spite.
' To-day, my merry archers, bring
' Your sharpest shaft and toughest string ;
' And bend to-day your strongest bow,
' (Well may we need its aid, I trow).
' And to each yeoman's stalwart aide
' Be sure his trusty blade be tied ;
' For well I hope a worthier foe
' Than fallow deer and flying doe,
' And better blood the turf may stain
' That circles in the roe-buck's vein
' To horse ! to horse ! we lose the day,
' March, merry archers, march away.'

THE CHASE.

HOW sweet, beneath the noontide beam,
To shelter near that mountain stream !
Along its mossy bank recline,
Midst forest shade of oak and pine,
And mark it shoot with foamy shock,
In many a fall from rock to rock ;
Till chance its stiller, broader wave,
Sleep in some grot or sylvan cave,
Its roof emboss'd with crystal bright,
Rich ore and sparkling stalactite ;
Where couch'd on moss and scented fern,
The eye of fancy might discern,
Reposing by the sacred fount,
Some virgin lady of the mount,
Such form as he of yore descried,
The hunter youth, who saw and died !
How freshly rolls the murmuring flood !
The tir'd heart heard the sound, and stood ;

A moment stood—the next, his side
Was plunged beneath the cooling tide.
The wearied wretch must drink or die—
For scarce the sun, that rides so high,
Had warm'd the misty morning air,
When Percy rous'd him from his lair.
The chieftain loud his bugle rung,
Eight gallant grey-hounds forward sprung,
Impetuous as the lightning flash
Thro' wood and bush and brake they dash,
O'er hill and stream and rocky steep,
With headlong plunge and desperate leap,
And vanish from the gazer's sight
Swift as a vision of the night;
But still by shatter'd branch is seen
Where late their whirlwind course has been
Lo! whilst they follow on the track,
Seven panting hounds come slowly back;
The eighth—ye well may guess his name—
Alone pursued the noble game.
In that Hart-Royal's rapid race
Vain was each rival's tardier pace;

Nor deem it shame to those who fail'd,
Where Luath's swiftness scarce avail'd
To cross his onward path of fear,
Or hang upon his harrass'd rear.
Thrice had he foil'd their utmost speed,
And harbour'd thrice in bower or mead,
And thrice the hunter's loud recheat
Had rous'd him from his close retreat—
And hark! again the forest rings,
Again from transient rest he springs,
And still maintains the hopeless chase
With stiffen'd limbs and faltering pace;
The big round tear steals down his cheek,
His mottled hide, once soft and sleek,
Now dark with heat and foul with stain,
His black'ning mouth and swelling vein,
Betray his fears and inward pain.
Tam'd is his pride, and humbled low
The branching honours of his brow,
His glory once, a burden now,
As on he wanders, sad and slow.

In vain he flies—tho' many a year
He pac'd those lawns without a peer;
Knows every hill, its streams and springs,
And all the forest's ancient rings;
Threading secure its wild-wood maze,
Thro' grassy lanes and winding ways;
Yet now his restless feet may rove
The live-long day thro' Cheviot grove,
Or e'er within its precincts green
He gain one still and lonely scene,
Unstartled by the loud report
Of princely Percy's generous sport—
That sport (which babes unborn shall rue)
How wide and varied to the view!
Here mark how rang'd in order'd row
The sturdy drovers slowly go,
And rouse the deer with strange surprise
From out their green-wood galleries;
There, listening to his coming foes,
The stag aloft his antlers throws,
And, proud in strength and ripen'd years,
Would fain defy the sound he fears;

And see ! where at his utmost need,
Vain every art and vain his speed,
He turns to meet the peril nigh,
And gathers all his strength to die,
Before yon oak, whose aged form
Still mocks the raving of the storm,
He firmly plants his desperate stand,
And menaces the Hunter-band.
How wild his eye-ball's fiery glare !
Let man, and hound, and horse beware !
While sore beset from head to heel,
The clamorous pack around him wheel,
Now fiercely urge their joint attack,
Now reel repuls'd and wounded back ;
Till, hark ! the treble mort is blown,
That drowns the victim's dying groan,
And the loud whoop to hill and plain
Proclaims the stout Hart-Royal slain.

Where towering hills, with heath imbrown'd,
O'er Cheviots inmost fastness frown'd,
Skirted with ranks of gloomy fir,
And fring'd with pointed juniper,

Darksome and deep a valley lay,
Where scarce the fervid noontide ray
Illumines many a cool alcove,
By shrubs and clustering branches wove;
So clearly where the river stream
Reflects the scene, you well might deem
It shew'd not on its polish'd face
An image of terrestrial grace;
But to the favour'd vision gave
A paradise beneath the wave;
Some blissful bower, or fairy reign,
Envelop'd long from eyes profane.
To that bright stream's romantic shore
Their various game the yeomen bore;
Sad spoils of that ill-fated day,
A hundred deer together lay;
The chieftest head of hart and hind,
That roam'd o'er Cheviot's hills of wind.
'Twas there, to view the tender game,
Earl Percy to the quarry came;
And mustering there from side to side,
The jolly hunters gladly hied;

With loitering march and merry din
The weary throngs came trooping in,
And sought with speed the pleasant screen
Of shady grove and arbour green;
Beneath their canopy of boughs,
To share the feast and gay carouse,
Till quickening gales refresh the day
And call them to their sylvan prey
Thro' fields and forests far away.

THE FEAST.

FAIR art thou, midst thy realms of air,
Son of the morning! thou art fair;
As rolling back the mists of night,
With conquering floods of crimson light,
Thou marchest forth, in godlike state,
From out thy golden eastern gate,
Like a strong giant, flush'd with wine,
To run that heavenly race of thine.
What hand may veil thy living rays,
What eye endure thine ardent blaze,
Against thy might what heart rebel,
And where thou art can darkness dwell?—
—Already, lo! the stormy west
Discloses wide her teeming breast,
And pours abroad a death-like shroud,
A growing mass of gloomy cloud;
The murky volumes dim the skies;
Thy splendor fades, thy glory dies!

How art thou fallen now, and shorn
Thy radiant beams, thou son of morn!

So fickle life's uncertain state,
So low the proud, so weak the great!
So human foresight's steadiest views
Are frail and faint as morning hues!
So the full tide of bliss runs high;
What foe alarms? What storm is nigh?
We see no storm—we fear no foe—
And perish, ere we feel the blow.

Who's he that speaks of foe or fear?
Such warning sound where slighted here;
Here yeomen whistle in the shade,
Plying the woodman's hardy trade;
Here round the bulky forest-king
A hundred keen-edg'd axes ring;
The biting metal rends his side,
Start the thick splinters far and wide;
And soon his broad colossal form
Shivers before the driving storm,
Thro' all its arms and branches grey,
From solid trunk to slender spray.

Still stands he firm—Another blow!
Scarce seen to move, reluctant, slow,
With all his weight of wood he bends;
That treacherous weight its succour lends,
And drags him groaning to the ground,
With jarring crash and thundering sound.
Full many a time, from oak or ash,
That day was heard the thundering crash,
And thro' the valley thickets broke
Full many a wreath of eddying smoke,
Athwart the forest vistas came
The fitful glare of ruddy flame;
Now quench'd in smothering clouds awhile,
Now fiercely shooting from the pile,
Where the blithe hunters of the deer
Prepare their rude and hasty cheer.
Oft has the sharp autumnal blast
Brush'd from those woods the ripen'd mast,
And many a denizen of air
Has hung his wicker eyrie there,
And many a dun deer scoop'd his lair;

But never such unwonted guest,
Usurp'd before the cushat's nest;
Nor e'er before such foe deterr'd
From their lov'd seats the dappled herd—
For where the wood-dove breath'd her note,
The Percy's banner'd streamers float,
Unfolded on the topmost tree,
In full baronial blazonry;
And tall steeds fill in scatter'd files,
The deer's deserted domiciles.

Unrein the steed, unstring the bow,
Fling the light bonnet from your brow;
Your couch is dress'd, your feast is spread;
The hunter's feast, the warrior's bed.
What feast so fit for hunter's cheer,
As forest fruit and haunch of deer?
What couch or pillow meet is found
For warriors slumbers, but the ground?
Come then, and stretch'd along the mead,
Quaff the full draught and freely feed—
While roam the stag and brinded boar,
Can hunger waste your ample store?

Or can your healthy goblets fail,
While yonder waters wash the vale?
Then share the feast, while faint with heat,
Your staunch hounds slumber at your feet;
With sudden start and stifled bay,
Pursue their visionary prey;
And thro' their cheerful dreams retrace
The recent triumphs of the chase.
Yes! tranc'd to-day in social joys,
Feast, till the liberal banquet cloy,
And teach these savage scenes of earth
To echo with your clamorous mirth.
To-morrow no obtrusive sound
Shall violate their awful bound,
Save some gigantic pine, that waves
His mournful boughs o'er new-made graves,
Or warrior, lingering still to weep
O'er scenes where all his comrades sleep.
Hence, boding fears! be ours to-day,
And speed the morrow as it may—
Throbs the warm pulse with fainter heat
At tale of love or martial feat,

Because, ere one short glass be told,
That throb may cease, that pulse be cold?
Or who would shun in bower or hall
Gay song and melting madrigal,
Altho' perchance its final breath
May vibrate in the ear of death?
Vain terrors all! be ours to-day,
Tho' ere the morrow wrapt in clay;
And tho' our latest strain, be ours
The song that rings thro' Cheviot bow'rs.

THE RECOUNTER.

‘PLEDGE, hunters, pledge our noble host,’
The Percy cried, with scornful boast,
As midst his gallant company
The beechen bowl he lifted high—
‘ How perfect were our festive cheer,
‘ Were but its bounteous master here!
‘ But good Earl Douglas, well I deem,
‘ Holds his fat bucks in light esteem,
‘ Content to let the bravest bleed
‘ At will of friend or foeman’s need.
‘ And much I fear, that warlike lord
‘ Forfeits for once his plighted word,
‘ On honour of a true-born knight
‘ To meet me here ere fall of night :
‘ For well it might my purpose suit
‘ To challenge here his brisk salute,
‘ And welcome him with greeting warm,
‘ As best becomes a soldier’s arm.’

He paus'd'—At once his hand was laid
Instinctive on his battle-blade ;
Half from his grassy seat uprais'd,
Each hunter on his comrade gaz'd ;
Check'd on the startled speaker's tongue,
The half-form'd phrase unutter'd hung ;
Hush'd song, and jest, and light dispute,
Breathless, and motionless, and mute,
They catch each rising sound—they hear
The quiet river murmuring near ;
They hear the busy zephir stir
Thro' the deep shade of pine and fir—
Hear they no doubtful sound beside ?
'Tis not the river's quiet tide
Singing along its pebbled bed ;
But near approach of hostile tread ;
Not the fresh breeze that sways the larch ;
But heavy tramp of hasty march,
Growling and doubling on the ear—
Scarce had the Percy seiz'd his spear,
When o'er the green a horseman spur'd,
Ere yet in view, his voice was heard ;

And as he from the wood emerg'd,
His straining steed he fiercely urged
And clamour'd his alarum cry—
' The Douglas comes—the foe is nigh;
' Behind yon hill their power appears,
' Full twenty hundred Scottish spears!
' Their arms, that in the sun-beam shine,
' Mark thro' the woods their winding line;
' Where round that cliff the river flows
' Their course is bent.'—'Then take your bows,'
Cried Percy, 'for a nobler game—
' Steady your hand, and sure your aim!
' Your arrows, steep'd in red-deer's blood,
' Shall shortly drink a richer flood:
' Broad is that red-deer's velvet flank,
' From which your shafts the life-blood drank,
' But full as broad a Scottish breast—
' Ring out a signal to the rest;
' And let us forth, my merry-men,
' To hunt these rovers home again.'
As Percy ceas'd, the bugles blew;
Strait to the sound his yeomen flew;

The slumbering stag-hound heard the note,
And starting, bay'd with answering throat,
Then lightly bounded on before;
While thronging fast, with loud uproar,
From hill and glen, o'er bank and brook,
Their bows the ready archers took;
Ere rang the bugle's second blast,
Their scatter'd force, so widely cast
Thro' the long alleys of the wood,
In one embodied phalanx stood;
And when again was heard the peal,
With knee advanc'd and steady heel,
Each bowman bent his trusty yew,
An arrow from his broad belt drew,
And ere he fix'd it on the string,
Twang'd the strong cord, and prov'd its spring.

Proudly advanc'd before the rest,
His coal-black steed the Percy prest;
And scarce his warlike ranks array'd,
When from the neighbouring forest-shade,
Borne on a charger, white as snow,
With steel-sperth at his saddle-bow,

And milk-white plume and visor shut,
Sheath'd in bright arms from head to foot,
A stately warrior rode amain ;
Behind, a long unbroken train
Thro' the deep pass in silence wound,
Save that along the hollow ground
Ran their quick footsteps' sullen roar ;
Two thousand chosen spears and more,
Whose banners floated on the gale,
All men of pleasant Tivydale.
Thro' that long line, from rear to van,
No whisper'd voice or murmur ran ;
Still as the sultry calms that bode
The brooding tempest, on they strode ;
Nearer they march'd, and yet more near,
Nor sound of voice nor sign of fear
In either host was heard or seen ;
But each, with eye intent and keen,
Bent on his foe a sidelong glance ;
Levell'd each Scot his pointed lance,
And half each English bowman strain'd
His stubborn yew, and half refrain'd.

Three paces more, amidst the throng
A thousand whistling shafts had sung;
But three short steps, the Scottish spear
Had charg'd the foe in full career.
With quicker foot the spearman tread
The space between—drawn to the head,
The arrow in the archer's hand
Leaps to the flight—scarce either band
Witholds awhile the hot assault—
Earl Douglas speaks; his warriors halt.

‘ And who are ye,’ the Baron cried,
‘ Who ravage thus our Cheviot side;
‘ Who dare within this border bound
‘ To wind a horn or cheer a hound;
‘ To slay at will our chiefest game,
‘ And waste our woods with fire and flame?
‘ Fools! think ye free from deadly scath,
‘ To meet the Douglas in his wrath?
‘ Think ye his spear a willow wand,
‘ His arm a lady's lilly hand,
‘ His helmet turn'd to friar's hood,
‘ Or cool as yonder stream his blood,

‘ That thus ye come, with hostile train,
‘ To beard him on his own domain,
‘ And rashly rouse him to the war?
‘ Tell, if ye dare, whose men ye are!’

Then Percy first his silence broke;
His hasty accents, as he spoke,
Trembled with rage and boiling spleen;
‘ What we have acted thou hast seen;
‘ What we may further dare to do,
‘ Thou mayst perchance more dearly rue.
‘ What boots it whence or how we came,
‘ Whose men we be, or what our name?
‘ Our errand to these woods is clear;
‘ We come to drive thy tender deer,
‘ Amidst thy parks to sport our fill,
‘ And freely wander where we will;
‘ And whilst within our throbbing veins
‘ One drop of living blood remains,
‘ Our steady purpose will we hold,
‘ Against thyself, a chieftain bold,
‘ With all thy forces, ten times told.’

With rising wrath Earl Douglas heard;
Hot choler in his bosom stirr'd,
And kindled in his swarthy eye;
With armed hand he smote his thigh;
On Percy turn'd a deadly look,
Then swore him by the holy book,
' Ere thus the Douglas thou defy,
' One of us two full sure shall die.
' I know thee well—an Earl thou art—
' Lord Percy, so am I. Apart
' Stand all our men—'twere shame to spill
' Their blood, for they have done no ill:
' But thou! there is mine honour's pledge;
' I'll prove it with my sword's keen edge,
' For life or death.'—with angry frown,
He dash'd his heavy gauntlet down.
That warlike gage, as soon as flung,
The Percy seiz'd.—' Accurs'd the tongue,
' Accurs'd the recreant hand,' he cried,
' By which thy proffer is denied.'
Nor more—but wheel'd his courser round
To gain the stretch of tilting ground;

Then for the onset threw the rein
Loose on his charger's sweeping mane,
And struck his spurs, and levell'd low
His spear, and stoop'd to meet his foe—
But marvell'd sore and stay'd his race—
Earl Douglas held the self-same place,
Lifted the helmet from his head,
As Percy came, and calmly said,
' Percy, thou wilt not say that fear
' Has fix'd me thus inactive here:
' Where lives the man whose hand may wave
' The steel that Douglas fears to brave?
' Who ever saw him hold aloof
' From hardy act of battle proof?
' With equal fortune, face to face,
' He takes no vantage, asks no grace;
' With tir'd or renovated limb,
' At morning dawn or twilight dim,
' The battle comes alike to him.
' Yet if thou dost not say me nay,
' We will not break the spear to day,

‘ With many toils forespent and slack,
‘ Their mettled speed our coursers lack;
‘ The waning day is well nigh past—
‘ A day to one or both the last,
‘ Give we to rest and peace the night;
‘ To-morrow, fresh as morning light,
‘ With the first ray that gilds our steel
‘ I meet thee in my just appeal.’

He said, but chaf’d by pride and ire,
His utterance chok’d with smother’d fire,
Percy not one short word replied,
But bow’d his head and turn’d aside.

Silent and stern, in gloomy mood,
To distant sojourn thro’ the wood
From parley pass’d the cheiftains bold;
Their gather’d powers behind them roll’d.
Reposing on the level west,
The sun had sought his couch of rest;
Yet still his last rays lightly play’d.
On the dark pine’s sepulchral shade;
A moment on the topmost spire
Quiver’d the faint decaying fire.

Then slow in reddening cloud went down ;
The forest lower'd with darker frown ;
Beneath its melancholy arch
The chieftains led their dusky march ;
In mist and shadow half obscur'd,
Thro' the lone woods their vassals pour'd ;
Their wearied limbs promiscuous threw
Where mountain heath and wild fern grew,
There snatch'd short sleep and troubled dream,
Or mus'd around the watch-fire's gleam.
The watch-fire's dying gleam alone
Thro' the night's settled darkness shone ;
Nor aught disturb'd its calm profound,
Save deep-ton'd bark of answering hound,
Scar'd by the raven's luckless croak ;
Or night-wind moaning thro' the oak,
Or wakeful courser's distant neigh,
Impatient for the spring of day.

THE REPULSE.

THRO' skies of chaste and cloudless blue
His temper'd rays the young sun threw ;
And nature, starting forth from shade,
The homage of her gladness paid ;
Like a fond parent, sweetly mild,
On all her wide creation smil'd,
Leading it on with calm delight
To peace and joy, to life and light.
Already bath'd in reeking show'rs
Of fragrant dew, the forest flowers
Unfold their blossoms to the morn ;
The linnet carols from the thorn ;
From tufted heath the roe-bucks spring ;
The wild bee murmurs on the wing,
In airy circles wandering on,
Humming his morning orison.
Those forest flowers, with night-dews damp,
Shrivel beneath the iron stamp

Of prancing chargers ; on his spray
The linnet hears, and flits away ;
The wild-bee's hum in distance dies ;
Thro' the thick wood the roe-buck flies,
To lurk in more secure retreat—
Whilst face to face the Barons meet.

Short courtesy was theirs and mute,
One stubborn bend, one stern salute ;
Disdainful homage, proudly spurn'd ;
Then Percy to his archers turn'd :
‘ Where yonder thickets guard your flanks,
‘ Archers, arrange your lengthen'd ranks ;
‘ There take your stations, each his own,
‘ Silent and motionless as stone.
‘ Who moves a limb, with dark design
‘ Of hostile vengeance, meets with mine ;
‘ Nor yet secure and listless stand,
‘ But keen of eye and prompt of hand,
‘ With bow-string fitted to the grooves,
‘ Silent and still—he dies who moves ;
‘ And now upon this rising mound
‘ Again my lion-banner ground ;

‘ Whence never shall it more be borne,
‘ Till from its height yon Heart be torn,
‘ And down to dust this arm shall bring
‘ Its crested crown and soaring wing.’

Array’d in valour’s smiling signs,
Earl Douglas rode along his lines ;
His courteous greeting gave to each
With joyous mien and cheering speech :—
‘ And here,’ he cried, ‘ my friends, set down
‘ The Heart that bears the wings and crown,
‘ That Heart, beneath whose holy shade
‘ My sires have drawn their conquering blade,
‘ Nor ever with dishonour sheath’d,
‘ Since royal Bruce his heart bequeath’d,
‘ And gallant James of Douglas swore
‘ To bear it from his native shore,
‘ And yield it up in Palestine,
‘ Within his dear Redeemer’s shrine.
‘ Now plant it here, for hence I go
‘ With whirlwind fury on my foe ;
‘ But mark, whatever fate betide,
‘ I charge you, by your courage tried,

‘ And as my knightly love you prize,
‘ To rest in peace—who moves, he dies.
‘ Now sound a summons to the fight,
‘ Douglas for Scotland and the right.’

As grey-hounds leash'd that view their prey
Stretching o'er level plains away,
Await, with strain'd and trembling hope,
The touch that gives their vigour scope,
And launches forth their sinewy speed ;
So keen, so eager, man and steed,
The Barons, point to point oppos'd,
Stood for one moment ere they clos'd.
The space that yet between them lay
Each champion mark'd with short survey,
His coursers loins more firmly prest,
And right against his foe-man's breast
His spear with deadly level laid—
Spurning the soil, their chargers neigh'd,
Gave back by turns the shrill retort,
And dar'd the fight with fiery snort.
Breathless the vassals view'd the scene ;
The bugles blew—when right between,

Ere yet the war-steeds felt the goad,
An armed knight of Scotland rode :
' Here let him stay,' he cry'd aloud ;
' Here, comrades, let the dastard shroud
' His head, who tamely stands to stare
' At perils which he fears to share.
' Scots! who would rather act than view
' The valiant feats that others do,
' Whose hearts are sound, whose words are deeds,
' March forward where Montgomery leads.'

A moment's doubt their spirit awes,
A chilling momentary pause ;
In thunder burst the quick reply—
' Montgomery! Douglas!' was the cry ;
' Douglas! Montgomery!' hill and glen
And rocks and woods return'd again ;
But stung with passion to the heart,
Earl Douglas saw his vassals thwart
The ransom of his honour's gage,
And gnash'd his teeth, and foam'd with rage ;
On the rash knight his red eye glar'd—
Ill had it with Montgomery far'd ;

By Douglas' hand his friend had died ;
When 'as blown in by wind and tide,
Down ancient Deva's narrow bed
The sea-flow rears its foaming head,
Bearing along, with conflict hoarse,
The current backward to its source ;
So rush'd the host of spears along,
Shouldering the Barons down the throng ;
Sweeping them both asunder far,
As on the foe they pour'd their war.

Firm and compact, man driv'n on man,
Right down upon the archer clan
With shouts the bold battalion pass ;
At every step the rapid mass
Bears on its way with gathering weight—
How may those lines its shock await ?
How shall those light-arm'd hunters reel
Before its strength of charging steel !
What hand may save, what human power ?
What, but that hissing arrowy shower,
Incessant, thick as rattling hail,
That drives before the winter gale ?

So well with feather'd shafts supplied,
So well their bows the archers plied,
Ere one broad shaft had reach'd its aim,
From the same hand another came ;
And hark ! that fatal twang, that rings
Continual from the bounding strings ;
Respite or intermission none—
He walks to death who ventures on ;
Who bravely meets the deadly flight,
Gives the winged weapon half its might.
Appall'd and fear-struck as they stand,
With rapid strides death thins the band :
At the first flight that left the bow,
Full seven score gallant Scots lay low ;
And at the next, as many more
Fell breathless, weltering in their gore.
Each faithful shaft, so shrewdly aim'd,
Or slew outright or sorely maim'd ;
Dissolv'd the life or gall'd the limb ;
And vain the mad attempt of him
On whom the piercing plagues descend,
To wrench away the barbed end.

That firm array, that manly shout,
Are chang'd to groans and hasty rout;
'Tis death to stop—'tis shame to fly—
Retreat and live—or stay to die.
But where to turn? What refuge find?
The murd'rous volley streams behind.
Back, o'er the dying and the dead,
To the near wood the bravest fled,
With headlong haste and havoc strange;
Till far beyond the arrow's range,
Broken, discomfited, and wet
With kindred blood, again they met.

THE BATTLE.

TO every feature mounted high
The burning blush—each spearman's eye
On earth with conscious shame was bent,
As down the lines Earl Douglas went.
Sullen and mute he pass'd along,
Marshal'd by signs the rallying throng,
Nor word of threat or cheering deign'd;
Till their close battle-ranks regain'd,
Forward he stalk'd before his band
With surly stride—for near at hand,
Stretch'd on the plain, his gallant grey
Transfix'd with many an arrow lay;
' Once when I charg'd you to be still,
' Once have you cross'd my earnest will;
' Now, when I bid you march like men,
' Gainsay my orders once again;
' Here hide, and let your Chieftain go,
' To prove what peasant's puny bow
' From this good axe shall guard my foe.'

He said, and rush'd across the field—
That ponderous axe, which few might wield,
Whose temper cleft the bedded stone,
In his broad grasp terrific shone,
Impatient of their honour's stain,
Perils forgot, and wounds and pain,
In silent and determin'd mood
His clan their rapid charge renew'd.

Secure in arms, without a fear,
The hunters saw the storm draw near;
One single pace advanc'd their stride,
And fast again their death-bolts plied;
Drawing their bows with might and main,
Till the tough yew's elastic grain
Splinter'd beneath the vigorous strain.
Thick fall again the pointed reeds,
Again each foremost warrior bleeds,
Again the ground their life blood drinks;
In vain!—for where a spearman sinks,
Prompt to avenge his comrade's fate,
Breathing despair and double hate,
A fiercer foe succeeds.—In vain!
No shafts that giant form restrain;

While with a shout that chills their hearts,
Earl Douglas on the bowmen darts—
Backward, as from a tigress spoil'd
Of her lov'd young, the ranks recoil'd
Before his steel, that falling prone,
Cut sheer the flesh and crash'd the bone;
To right, to left, with deadly sweep,
Thro' the dismay'd and staggering heap
An ample path of blood he hew'd;
Nor less his clan their charge pursued;
Down on the arrow's point they bore,
And bath'd their spears in English gore.
On earth, disabled and unstrung,
The useless bow away was flung,
And many a hand, whose boasted craft
Sped from its string the certain shaft,
Its cunning lost, and cold as clay,
Beside it on the green turf lay.

Then fiercer rag'd the equal strife,
Man match'd to man and life to life;
Then strongly rose the battle's tide;
Full fast they clos'd on every side;

The deafening clamour rent the sky,
The dying shriek, the victor cry;
Screaming above the loud uproar,
Aloof the frightened falcons soar;
The stag-hound hears the din, and cow'rs
Trembling within the darkest bow'rs.
Push'd by the spear and disarray'd,
The archers draw their trusty blade,
Plunge desperate on the outstretch'd pike,
Grapple the foe and fiercely strike;
Or where the press forbids their blows,
Upon the nearest foeman close.
Together twin'd, the wrestlers gasp
Beneath the strong athletic grasp,
Till writhing on the blood-stain'd ground,
With shorten'd blade they fix the wound.
Wounds, perils, death, were held at nought;
No wavering doubt, no lurking thought
Of flight or fear in either band;
Firmly they fought with heart and hand.
Nor vulgar blood alone was spilt,
But joust was there and tourney-tilt;

With fiery shock together ran
Full many a gallant gentleman :
The brittle spears in shivers broke ;
Stagger'd the steeds ; beneath the stroke
The dizzy warriors backward bent.
There, on the turf, his buckler rent,
Down from his furious charger thrown,
Lay the brave Lord of Aggerstone ;
And long shall Berwick's woods bewail
His fall ! But warlike Delavale
A deep revenge and deadly, vow'd ;
Spurring across the thickest crowd,
The Murray from his seat he threw ;
Him, by the spur entangled, drew
Thro' the wide woods his madd'ning horse,
And spurn'd at speed the breathless corse.
Nor strength nor blooming youth could save
Thee, Heron, from an early grave ;
Tho' many a foe thine arm defied,
Beat down to earth Lord Maxwell's pride,
And Scottish Liddell captive led ;
There, too, the valiant Hartley bled ;

And still the bard delights to tell
How Ralph the Rokeby fought and fell;
Nor yet with passing years is gone
The fame of gallant Widdrington,
Who, tho' dismember'd, scorn'd to yield,
But bravely knelt and kept the field.

But who, thro' mingled sword and spear,
Drives his dark charger's mad career,
Cover'd with blood and foam and dust;
With downright stroke and sidelong thrust,
Whirling around his glittering brand?
Who but the stout Northumberland?
' Douglas! come forth! Does Douglas hide
' His crest in war? Come forth!' he cried;
' My sword is cloy'd with meaner worth;
' Douglas! the Percy calls—come forth!
Resounding from his manly throat,
Far o'er the field the accents float,
Loud as the trumpet's brazen breath,
Where Douglas wrought the work of death.
The axe, that o'er his shoulder swung,
For the swift downfall ready hung,

Ere the doom'd victim felt its sway,
He check'd in air, and turn'd away;
Straight through the thickest press he bore;
As plunging from the lofty shore,
Some hardy swimmer stems the tide,
Dashing the boisterous surf aside,
So rush'd Earl Douglas in his wrath
Thro' yielding crowds, so clear'd his path
Thro' men and steeds, thro' arms and blood,
Till where Earl Percy fought, he stood.

High on his coal-black charger rais'd,
Lord Percy o'er the combat gaz'd,
Seeking his noble foe in vain;
' Douglas, come forth !' he cried again,
' Where lurks he, like a stricken deer ?'—
' Turn, Percy, turn ; behold him here ;
' Forego thy search—the deer is found.'
Lord Percy saw, and leap'd to ground ;
Loose thro' the forest ran his steed ;
Together, with the lightning's speed,
The knights, like angry lions, rush'd—
Their weapons fell—the warm blood gush'd.

No feign'd advance, no quick recoil,
No fence was there, or artful foil,
But stiffly foot to foot they close,
And give and take a storm of blows.
At once they strike, at once they bend
Beneath the griding blades, that rend
The polish'd mail, like folds of wax ;
Swiftly descends the ponderous axe,
Nor, wav'd by Percy's warlike hand,
Less fiercely falls the temper'd brand.
Firm as a rock on ocean's shore
Amidst the breakers' stormy roar,
Awhile the warrior's stand the shock ;
But, as the waters round that rock
Recede in silence from its base,
Ere long, their vigour ebbs apace.
Thick heaves their labouring breath and scant,
Their strong knees shake—they reel—they pant ;
Scarce their weak arm avails to lift
The blade, that falls with random drift ;
Gasping for breath, all pale and spent
With toils and wounds, with one consent

They drop their blades, their helms unloose,
And claim and give a common truce.

Long pause and silent interven'd;
Each Baron on his weapon lean'd,
Bar'd to the cooling gale his head,
And freshly breath'd. Then Douglas said :
' Well hast thou fought this stubborn field;
' Enough—yield, valiant Percy, yield !
' To one that bears the Douglas' name
' Percy may yield, nor deem it shame :
' No common captive, thou shalt find
' No common bonds to thee assign'd ;
' The ransom sums the victor claims
' I freely give, and princely James,
' Our Scottish King, with worthy grace,
' At his right hand shall give thee place :
' And more—throughout his gallant court
' Thus will I spread my true report :
' Of all the knighthood, far and near,
' That wear the spur and break the spear,
' And well fulfil their honour's vow,
' The bravest and the best art thou !'

Smil'd Percy then with bitter scorn :
' Nay, never yet the Scot was born
' Shall live to boast on Scottish land,
' He won the Percy, hand to hand.
' Wouldst thou our stern debate should cease ?
' Yield thou, proud Lord ! I grant thee peace—
' Is mortal battle thine award ?
' 'Tis well—Lord Douglas ! watch thy guard !'

He said, and stood for fight prepar'd ;
Nor Douglas aught replied, but rear'd
His axe, and aim'd a weighty blow :
That instant, from an English bow,
The hand unknown, its flight unseen,
An arrow struck him, quick and keen ;
Straight to his heart its passage tore,
And quiver'd in its very core.

As falls some oak's gigantic trunk,
With a deep groan to earth he sunk ;
Half falter'd out a feeble cry—
' Fight on, my merry-men ! I die—
' Fight on.'—In pangs he bit the ground,
And breath'd his spirit in the sound.

Lord Percy saw the death-shaft pierce
The Baron's breast.—His heart, tho' fierce,
Of moody temper, harsh, and stern,
With manly grief began to yearn ;
In his dark eye the big drop dwelt ;
Down on the bloody turf he knelt,
And took the dead man by the hand :
' O ! would that I had lost my land
' Ere I had seen this cursed deed ;
' O Christ ! my very heart doth bleed
' With sorrow, Douglas, for thy sake ;
' For never did mischance o'ertake
' A nobler knight, or more renown'd
' Or in whose constant breast was found
' More loyal faith, and fair degree
' Of high and valorous chivalry.'

Down his brown cheek the tears ran fast ;
More had he spoke—but spoké his last.
All on the deathful scene intent,
As unaware and sad he bent
O'er his fall'n foe, and to his breast
The clay-cold hand in pity prest,

Borne thro' the fight in full career,
The false Montgomery drove his spear
Right thro' the Earl's unguarded side;
With his life-blood the shaft was dy'd
Beneath the tree Lord Percy fell—
The green-wood tree he lov'd so well.

Not unaveng'd. Within the wood,
Behind an oak, a bowman stood;
Whence, safely hid from hostile sight,
He aim'd his mortal shafts aright;
And saw, with mingled rage and grief,
How basely fell his noble chief.
Against Montgomery's breast he drew
With subtlest skill his trusty yew;
Lent all his force and loos'd the string;
The arrow flew—the grey goose-wing
That on its slender shaft was set,
In the false Knight's heart-blood was wet.
Fast died away the battle's din;
The wasted fight wax'd faint and thin;
O'er the wild field was heard alone
The murmur'd plaint, the parting moan;

Save when a distant shout arose
And transitory strife, of those
Who wandering midst that scene of woe,
Encounter'd with a casual foe ;
And saw along their dismal path,
Heap'd like the mower's copious swath,
In undistinguished carnage blend
The slaughter'd files of foe and friend.

They found, the green-wood shade beneath,
Where lay the Barons, join'd in death ;
And soon a sad surviving few,
In silent woe, together drew ;
No longer foes—for grief had wrought
A gentler mood, and every thought
Was leagued in sorrow's sad accord—
Bending around each dear-lov'd lord,
And o'er the corpses pouring warm
Their faithful tears, the lifeless form
From earth they rais'd, and parting slow,
With wailings of funeral woe,

The Cheviot's fatal wood they leave ;
Thick, as they past, the darkening eve
Clos'd on their steps ; abrupt and cold
The night-gale rose ; and faintly toll'd
With many a pause, the vesper bell,
That seem'd to ring a parting knell.

Soft dropt the dews of heaven on those,
The fallen brave, and sweet repose
Upon their heavy eyelids be,
Who sleep beneath the green-wood tree !
Sweet rest and deep to-night is theirs ;
To-morrow, soon as matin prayers
Awake the morn, and convent song,
Shall weeping widows hither throng ;
On boughs of birch and hazel gray
Shall bear their lov'd remains away ;
Hang fresh-wove garlands on their biers,
Wash their deep wounds with brinish tears,
With long embrace their relics fold,
And place in earth their sacred mould.

There, when the shades of evening close
The hunter of the mountain roes
On the low mound shall often sit,
And while the night-jars round him flit,
And the quick bat his prey pursues,
On times of old shall fondly muse,
And sigh the mouldering heaps to trace,
That mark the scene of CHEVY CHASE!



NOTES.

The fierce Gyr-falcon leaves his mew.

P. 5.

“**GIRFALCUS** est avis rapax, major quam falco, et est magnæ virtutis et potentæ mirabilisque audaciæ, adeo ut inventi sunt aliqui, audaci spiritu, aquilas insultasse.”

P. Crescentius de Agricultura.

“The Gyr-falcon is a rapacious bird, larger than the falcon, strong and courageous, and of such wonderful audacity, that some of them have been known to attack the eagle himself.”

In that Hart Royal's rapid race.

P. 8.

Properly, a Hart Royal is one that has been hunted by the King. “If he escape, and proclamation be made for his safe return without let or detriment, he is then called a Hart Royal proclaimed.”

Gentleman's Recreation, p. 6, Lond. 1677.

And thrice the hunter's loud recheat.

P. 9. .

A recheat, in the huntsman's phraseology, is a lesson which the huntsman winds on the horn, when the hounds have lost their game, to call them back from pursuing a counter-scent.

From out their green-wood galleries.

P. 10.

The tracks and openings made by the deer through the woods and thickets are called their galleries. Thus, "if you would know the height and thickness of the hart, observe his entries and galleries into the thickets, and what boughs he hath overstridden, and mark from them the height of his belly from the ground."

Gent. Recr. p. 68.

Till hark! the treble mort is blown.

P. 11.

"If a buck, a double, if a stag, a treble mort is blown by one, and then a whole recheat in concert by all that have horns; and, that finished, immediately a general *whoo-whoop*."

Gent. Recr. p. 80.

The chiefest head of hart and hind.

P. 12.

"Some may here object and say, why should the hart and hind, being both of one kind, be accounted two several beasts? To this I answer, that though they are beasts of one kind, yet that they are of several seasons; for the hart hath his season in summer, and the season of the hind begins when the hart's is over.

Gent. Recr. p. 5.

Think ye his spear a willow wand.

P. 25.

This passage is taken from a ballad called "Kinmont Willie," published in Mr. Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol. i. p. 111, in which the Laird of Buccleuch exclaims—

O is my basnet* a widow's curch,†
Or my lance a wand of the willow tree,
Or my arm a lady's lilly hand,
That an English lord should lightly me?

Again my lion-banner ground.

P. 32.

One of the ancient badges or cognizances of the Percy family was a white lion statant.

The heart that bears the wings and crown.

P. 33.

The heart crowned and winged is the ancient crest of the Douglas family. The circumstances from which it took its rise, are narrated in his usual minute and entertaining manner by Froissart, and their insertion here, from the excellent translation of Mr. Johnes, can stand in need of no apology. "During this truce," says Froissart, "it happened that King Robert of Scotland, who had been a very valiant knight, waxed old, and was attacked with so severe an illness, that he saw his end was approaching."—"He therefore called to him the gallant Lord James Douglas, and said to him, 'My dear friend Lord James Douglas, you know that I have had much to do, and have suffered many troubles, during the time I have lived, to support

* Helmet.

† Coif.

the rights of my crown : at the time that I was most occupied, I made a vow, the non-accomplishment of which gives me much uneasiness. I vowed, that, if I could finish my wars in such a manner, that I might have quiet to govern peaceably, I would go and make war against the enemies of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the adversaries of the Christian faith. To this point my heart has always leaned ; but our Lord was not willing, and gave me so much to do in my life-time, and this last expedition has lasted so long, followed by this heavy sickness, that, since my body cannot accomplish what my heart wishes, I will send my heart in the stead of my body to fulfil my vow.—And, as I do not know any one knight so gallant or enterprising, or better formed to complete my intentions than yourself, I beg and entreat of you, dear and special friend, as earnestly as I can, that you would have the goodness to undertake this expedition for the love of me, and to acquit my soul to our Lord and Saviour ; for I have that opinion of your nobleness and loyalty, that, if you undertake it, it cannot fail of success—and I shall die more contented : but it must be executed as follows—

‘ I will, that, as soon as I shall be dead, you take my heart from my body, and have it well embalmed ; you will also take as much money from my treasury as will appear to you sufficient to perform your journey, as well as for all those whom you may choose to have accompany you, to deposit it at the Holy Sepulchre of our Lord, where he was buried, since my body cannot go there. You will not be sparing of expence ; and provide yourself with such company and such things suitable to your rank ; and wherever you pass, you will let it be known, that you bear the heart of King Robert of Scotland, which you are

carrying beyond seas by his command, since his body cannot go thither.'

"All those present began bewailing bitterly; and when the Lord James could speak, he said, 'Gallant and noble king, I return you a hundred thousand thanks for the high honour you do me, and for the valuable and dear treasure with which you entrust me; and I will most willingly do all that you command me with the utmost loyalty in my power; never doubt it, however I may feel myself unworthy of such a high distinction.'

'The king replied, 'Gallant knight, I thank you.—You promise it me then?'

'Certainly, Sir, most willingly,' answered the knight. He then gave his promise upon his knighthood.

"The king said, 'Thanks be to God! for I shall now die in peace, since I know that the most valiant and accomplished knight of my kingdom will perform that for me, which I am unable to do for myself.'

"Soon after, the valiant Robert Bruce, king of Scotland, departed this life, on the 7th of November, 1327. His heart was embalmed, and his body buried in the monastery of Dunfermline."

This honourable mission, however, Douglas did not live to accomplish.—After the necessary preparations, he set out with a splendid retinue, and, "hearing that Alphonso king of Spain, was waging war against the Saracen king of Granada, he con-

sidered, that if he should go thither he should employ his time and journey according to the late king's wishes ; and when he should have finished there, he would proceed further, to complete that with which he was charged. He made sail, therefore, towards Spain, and landed first at Valentia ; thence he went straight to the King of Spain, who was with his army on the frontiers, very near the Saracen king of Granada.

“ It happened, soon after his arrival, that the king of Spain issued forth into the fields, to make his approaches nearer the enemy ; the king of Granada did the same ; and each king could easily distinguish the other's banners, and they both began to set their armies in array.

“ The Lord James placed himself and his company on one side, to make better work, and a more powerful effect.

“ When he perceived that the battalions on each side were fully arranged, and that of the king of Spain in motion, he imagined they were about to begin the onset ; and as he always wished to be among the first rather than the last on such occasions, he and all his company stuck spurs into their horses, until they were in the midst of the king of Granada's battalion, and made a furious attack on the Saracens. They fled, and Douglas, with his companions, eagerly pursued them. Taking the casket from his neck, which contained the heart of Bruce, he threw it before him, and cried, ‘ Now pass thou onward as thou wast wont, and Douglas will follow thee, or die.’ The fugitives rallied—Surrounded and overwhelmed by superior numbers, Douglas fell. His few surviving companions found his body in the field, together with the casket, and reverently conveyed them

to Scotland. The remains of Douglas were interred in the sepulchre of his fathers, in the church of Douglas, and the heart of Bruce was deposited at Melros."

See Johnes's Froissart, vol. i. p. 48, 51.

What, but that hissing arrowy show'r.

P. 36.

The universal use of the long-bow amongst the English, and its formidable effects, in ancient times, are well known. Many instances of this may be collected from the narrations of Froissart. "Upon this," says he on one occasion, "the English archers began to use their bows, and so well, that none dared to come within the reach of their arrows."—"The English archers then advanced one step forward, and shot their arrows with such force and quickness, that it seemed as if it snowed. When the Genoese felt these arrows, which pierced their arms, heads, and through their armour, some of them cut the strings of their cross-bows, others flung them on the ground, and all turned about, and retreated quite discomfited."

Johnes's Froissart, vol. i. p. 514, 325.

Together twin'd, the wrestlers gasp.

P. 42.

"There was much hacking and cutting of each other, with lances and battle-axes, seizing each other by main strength and wrestling. They were so much intermixed together, they engaged man to man, and behaved with a valour it was marvellous to see."

Johnes's Froissart, vol. i. p. 632.

Nor vulgar blood alone was spilt.

P. 42.

In enumerating the persons of rank who are supposed to have fallen in this encounter, I have preferred the authority of the more ancient ballad, which differs considerably in this respect from the other. The notices which follow of the different families of distinction, to which they belonged, are taken from Dr. Percy's notes to the ancient ballads of Chevy Chase, and the Battle of Otterbourne.

Lay the brave Lord of Aggerstone.

P. 43.

The family of Haggerstone, of Haggerstone near Berwick, has been seated there for many centuries, and still remains. Thomas Haggerstone was amongst the commissioners returned for Northumberland, in 12 Hen. VI. 1438. (Fuller's Worthies, p. 310). The name is spelt Agerstone in Leland's Itinerary. Vol. VII. p. 54.

————— *But warlike Delavale.*

P. 43.

In the ancient ballad he is termed "Sir Jorg, the worthè Lovele." Joh. De Lavale was sheriff of Northumberland, 34 Hen. VII. In Nicholson, this name is spelt Da Lovel, p. 304. This seems to be the ancient family of Delaval, of Seaton Delaval, in Northumberland, whose ancestor was one of the twenty-five barons appointed to be guardians of Magna Charta.

The Murray from his seat he threw.

P. 43.

The person here meant was probably Sir Charles Murray of

of Cockpoole, who flourished at that time, and was ancestor of the Murrays, sometime Earls of Annandale.

See Douglas' Peerage.

Thee, Heron, from an early grave.

P. 43.

This family, one of the most ancient, was long of great consideration in Northumberland. Sir William Heron of Ford Castle was summoned to parliament, 44 Edw. III. Ford Castle has descended by heirs general to the family of Delaval, mentioned in a preceding article. The Herons of Chip-Chase are another branch of the Herons of Ford Castle.

Beat down to earth Lord Maxwell's pride.

P. 43.

The family of Maxwell, Lord of Maxwell, was always very powerful on the borders. I cannot find that any chief of this family was named Sir Hugh, but Sir Herbert Maxwell was, about this time, much distinguished. This might have been originally written Sir H. Maxwell, and by transcribers converted into Sir Hugh. The ancient ballad says, "Sir Hugh Maxwell, a lorde he was." Maxwell, Earls of Nithsdale, belonged to this family.

And Scottish Liddell captive led.

P. 48.

The ancient family of the Liddells were originally from Scotland, where they were Lords of Liddell castle, and of the barony of Buff (See Collins's Peerage). The head of this family is Lord Ravensworth of Ravensworth Castle, in the county of Durham.

There too the valiant Hartley bled.

P. 43.

Hartley is a village near the sea, in the barony of Tinemouth, about seven miles from North Shields. It probably gave name to a family of note at that time.

How Ralph the Rokeby fought and fell.

P. 44.

Mr. Scott's last publication has rendered the name of Rokeby familiar to every ear. Although this name is, in the ballad, spelt Rugbè, it seems to belong to the same family which gives the title to Mr. Scott's poem; where ample information respecting it is to be found. Its head, about the time when this ballad was written, was Sir Ralph, a common name of the Rokebys. It will not be wondered that the Percies should be thought to bring followers out of Yorkshire, where they themselves were originally seated, and had always such extensive property and influence.

The fame of gallant Widdrington.

P. 44.

About four miles to the south-west of Felton, is Widdrington Castle, which "standeth (says Leland) within half a mile of the shore, somewhat as touching against Coket island." This castle belonged from the reign of Edward I. to the Widdringtons, of whom Rog. de Widdrington was sheriff of Northumberland, in 36 Edw. III. (Fuller, p. 311), and many others of the same name afterwards. In 1648, Sir William was created Baron Widdrington, and was slain soon after at Wigan; and in the year 1715, the estate was forfeited by his grandson. Of this family was the late Lord Witherington.

The false Montgomery—

P. 68.

Sir Hugh Montgomery was son of John, Lord Montgomery, the lineal ancestor of the Earls of Eglintoun. The very ungracious part assigned to him in the ballad, raises a strong prejudice against his character, which does not appear to be justified by what can be collected from history. He behaved very gallantly, and according to some accounts, was slain by an arrow, at the battle of Otterbourne, in which his father, Lord Montgomery, took prisoner Harry Percy himself, the renowned Hotspur, who, for his ransom, built the castle of Penoon in Ayrshire, belonging to the Earls of Eglintoun. This exploit is celebrated in the Scottish ballad of the battle of Otterbourne, published in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish border*, vol. i. p. 25, and it is not unlikely that the spleen and prejudice of the old English bard may have revenged the heroism of the father on the son, by attributing to him the dishonourable action narrated in the ballad.

And while the night-jars round him flit.

P. 72.

This singular bird is better known by the name of the goat-sucker. It is of the swallow species, and is the largest of that tribe known in England. It is most frequently seen towards Autumn, and always in the dusk of the evening. Its motions are irregular and rapid, sometimes wheeling in quick succession round a tree or other object, diving at intervals, as if to catch its prey; when perched, it sits usually on a bare twig, its head lower than its tail, and in this attitude utters its jarring note. It is a solitary bird, two being seldom seen together, but sitting at a little distance from each other.

Bewick's British Birds, vol. i. p. 262.



MISCELLANEOUS POEMS,

SONNETS,

&c.



POEMS, SONNETS, &c.

TO TIME.

STILL dost thou urge thy pinions, hoary Time !
With speedy sweep, and still, from day to day,
Restless as wont, winging thine onward way,
Hast sunk another year in swift decline !
And not as yet that ancient frame of thine
Hath waxed weak, nor yearned for repose—
That frame, which erst the Architect sublime
Will'd into being, and forthwith arose
A noble form, and one whose god-like force
Promis'd to run an everlasting course—
Then thou exulted'st in thy glad career,
Young Time ! and sportive leading on the year

Burden'd with bliss, thou in thy boundless flight
Fed'st the fresh-springing fountains of delight
That gush'd eternal in each golden sphere—
But now full long, they say, thy wrinkled brow
Hath loveless been and bare; full long hath lost
Its tressed beauties, or what few still flow
Are blanch'd and faded with a thawless frost.
And better were it now that thou should'st fold
Thy flagging wings in everlasting rest—
So never more in chronicles unblest
Man's foul misdeeds should be by thee enroll'd;
So should thy guilty records never more
Blush deep with sins and shames unknown before.
O! for the might of him at whose command
In the mid heaven the sun imprisoned lay,
And bent on earth a strange and fixed ray;
Or her of Endor's charms, or sorcerer's wand!
That I might strive, tho' with unlawful force,
Relentless Time! to stay thy fatal course,
And bid with thee the fiends of war to stand
And death—for earth herself is drunk with blood
That from the pall'd and sicken'd ground doth rise,

Like the thick-curling smoke of sacrifice;
While ravenous murder and her haggard brood,
With hungry howlings crave for fresh supplies,
And banish from the world all peaceful interlude.

Why should'st thou journey further? They are
gone,

The god-like comrades of thine earlier way,
Suns, that around thee beam'd a glorious day,
And sped thy course majestically on.

O read thine hoary locks, and lower bend
That head, age-bow'd already!—for the fire
Of former things hath shone, and on my lyre
The spirit of past ages doth descend!

I see them rise around me! Shall I gaze
Unpunish'd? Should my vision, tho' endued
With more than eagle keenness, unsubdued
Endure the force of that unrivall'd blaze?
Lo! first and fairest of the heavenly train,
The light of freedom shines, such as of yore
Ere yet her brilliancy was taught to wane,
She rose on elder Greece, or that fam'd shore,
The Eden of the world, sweet Italy—

And with her they, who dwell but with the free,
Twin-born, immortal sisters, Peace and Truth,
Advancing hand in hand. Unfading youth
Preludes their steps—an angel troop behind—
Resplendent virtue, Majesty of mind,
Justice, and she whose look her wrath beguiles,
Benignant Mercy, milder than the dove;
Magnanimous valour, pity link'd with love,
Fresh joys, and graces, and perennial smiles.

Sad and forsaken, melancholy Time !
What darken'd path may yet remain, pursue—
For these, the bright attendants of thy prime,
Tempestuous fortunes and obscuring crime
Long since have quench'd—or but a distant view
Of scanty glory thro' the gloom is thrown—
Yet when this mournful task of thine is o'er,
And thou, before the Great Eternal Throne
Shall render up thy mission, there once more
Expect to meet their beautiful array
Perfect, and cloth'd with never-ending day.
Meanwhile, not wholly dark—one starry gem
That dawn'd upon thy birth, for ever new,

Shall teach thee happier chances to infer—
Unsetting Hope—and sweetly light thee through,
Like that bright eastern star of Bethlehem,
By which at night the wisemen guided were
With psalms of joy, and frankincense and myrrh,
To greet the heav'n-born babe, the branch of Jesse's
stem.

1808.

TO THE SEA BIRD.

ROW on thy stormy way,
Thou lonely bird! above the deep-hung cloud;
Above the dashing spray
Of ocean roaring loud,
In the storm's gloomiest depth thyself enshroud—
For it rejoices thee
When in his might the tempest sallies forth
From the wide portals of the thundering north,
And travels on the struggling sea

With footsteps of intolerable wrath.
Then floating on the fierceness of his breath,
High over the abyss
That heaves its billowy cataracts beneath,
Sole comrade of his path,
Thou, like a dauntless mariner,
Laughst at the hideous stir
Of watery gulph and precipice :
While the scar'd dwellers of the hoary deep
Shrink from the vehement uproar ;
And rous'd indignant from his sleep,
Unwieldy Behemoth
Forsakes his oozy couch of sloth
For the calm shelter of the sedgy shore.

Or rather, gentle bird !
Thou hast forsaken thy resounding cave
To watch the ravage of the merciless wave,
And bring the hopeless seaman word
How safest he may steer
From whirlpool far aloof and ambush'd rock
His vessel's tempest-winged career.
Or when his bark has yielded to the shock,

And never heard by other ear,
From the vex'd deep his dying shrieks arise,
Floating on his unquiet bier,
Unseen by other eyes,
When the pale victim of the waters lies,
His shroud is the white-foaming surge,
And his aerial dirge
The hollow scream of thy funereal cries.

 In thine unbounded flight,
Tell me, bold bird ! what wonders hast thou seen ?
Whether thy never-wearied course hath been,
To realms of ancient night,
Tracking the tempest to his northern den,
When, from the desolated haunts of men,
The unwilling monster goes
Back to his lair in polar darkness hid,
Beset with icy pyramid,
And undiscoverable snows ;
Or to whatever else of strange or rare,
Unlikely to presage,
Then, thorough the light air,
Hast steer'd thy devious pilotage ;

Or whether it perchance be thine
To search the secrets of the main,
And view, deep plung'd beneath the ocean brine,
The uncouth scenery
And the forbidden mysteries that lie
Beyond the threshold of the watery plain.

O traverser of earth,
And universal air, and circling sea!
Dear are the fountains of the deep to thee,
And dear their barrier girth
Of broad unshaken rock,
Storm-brac'd, and temper'd to the ocean shock.
In that wide range of sea and earth and air,
Hast thou not found some quiet seat
Untrod by human feet,
And unprofan'd by human crime or care?
O gentle wanderer, tell me where!
So may'st thou safely reach that happy coast
Where thou art wont to sit and hear
The unremitting roar
Of waters round the high and cavern'd shore,
And lull thy slumbers with that music drear;

So shall thy paths to me be ever dear,
Whether it please thee most
Upon the moaning blast, in curv'd career,
Earthward to wheel thine ominous way,
Herald of tempests, from the salt sea spray,
While dark o'er heav'n the hurrying cloud-racks fly ;
Or for some brighter sky
To spread thy white wings o'er the billowy foam,
And far away on easy pinion steer
O'er stranger realms of earth, and untrod seas to roam.

TO MY LYRE.

LONG time, my lyre, on thine unused string
The voice of music hath forgot to dwell,
Since I forsook thee in the laurel shade,
Where oft with thee at evening hour I stray'd,
And bade each hill and shelter'd valley ring
With the loud harping of thine artless shell ;—
Since that unblest farewell

When on the shatter'd bough aloft uphung
I left thee to the bleak hibernal gale,
Shunning advancing winter's aspect pale
Whose chilling influence all thy chords unstrung ;
And with its stormy and unsparing waste
From the dear walks of Poesy awhile
Perforce my much unwilling footstep chac'd—
And yet I thought with the first conquering smile
Of Spring, to greet thee in thy budding bow'r,
And woo thee there to waken once again
If so I might, a somewhat loftier strain
With worthier numbers of maturer pow'r.

And I am come !—But not in vernal prime,
Forsaken Lyre ! and I am come to thee !
But not with high-built rhyme,
And practis'd sound of skilful psaltery ;
Nor purposing to dwell
With thee henceforward in thy myrtle maze :
But with unwonted step, thro' mossy dell,
O'er wind-swept hills and solitary ways,
I have come forth unto thee for a while,
And with uncertain finger fain would raise

At best a short and desultory strain.
And henceforth all in vain
From forest depth, or valley's dark defile,
Or sylvan cave, or river's haunted bed,
Those hidden symphonies shall win my ear
Which erst with guidance strange have often led
My startled progress to thy lov'd retreat ;
When I have wander'd far away to meet
Descending Eve in some sequester'd glade,
And swept thy strings amid the tempest's beat
And rush of sounding winds, and growing shade.

Henceforth in vain ! full many an hour has roll'd
Its tedious current to the dark abyss,
The unreclaim'd, untold,
Eternal Past, since to my mortal goal
I travel darkly through a world of pain,
Where visible Nature, with her goodly train
Of beauties, and the gardens of the soul
Alike have faded, with their bowers of bliss ;
Since I have pass'd with melancholy brow
The disregarded boundaries of time
Wearied and weather-worn. For in my prime

Sickness hath touch'd me with a withering charm,
And with her languid breath unnerv'd the arm,
My Lyre! that trembles as it grasps thee now,
But to my daily vow
Attemper'd airs, and kinder suns may bring,
(So let me still believe)
Restoring virtue on their balmy wing.
Then will I once again, thrice-hallow'd Eve!
Tho' with a weak and tuneless tongue,
And with a simple song,
Tuneless and weak, my faltering voice intrude
On the deep stillness of thy solitude;
And thou wilt deign to hear the lowly lay
Floating by fits upon thy dewy gales,
And bid thy blue hills, and deep-cavern'd vales,
Where the coy echo shuns the garish day,
Its humble notes in sweeter sounds to dress,
And waft their murmurs through the wilderness;
Heard only by the loitering village binds;
And then, while westlin winds
Along my pathway gently strew
The russet mantle of the dying grove,

While all its wreathed labyrinths I rove
And ravag'd bow'rs, some dim autumnal eve,
While o'er my path the rapid bat shall weave
His giddy circles, and his sober friend
The dark-sheath'd beetle from his horn shall send
A long and surly note that seems to tell
To the slow-parting day a last farewell ;
O then, my long lost Lyre !
I yet may throw my venturous hand anew
With steadier touch along thy darling wire ;
Yet once again enamour'd o'er thee bend,
And call thy music forth—Till then, my Lyre ! adieu

Where the bold soldier's dauntless pride
May woo the battle, as a bride ;
Where, borne on gay or fatal hours,
Honour still, with fadeless flow'rs,
May strew the path of glad return,
Or wreath them round his funeral urn.

No human hand—no hostile blow,
Laid those banded thousands low !
On them no battle equipage
Vollied forth its iron rage ;
Nor wide confronted, life to life,
Fail'd they in successful strife.
O'er that island's baneful soil
Death had stretch'd his secret toil,
And built within its yawning breast
The chambers of eternal rest.
With manly step, and mien elate,
The warriors trod the Land of Fate,
Where the death-envenom'd ground
Breath'd destroying vapours round,
And all her sadden'd realms array'd
In one blue robe of deadly shade.

Then, with each unconscious breath,
Was quaff'd the bitter draught of death,
And every slow-consuming frame
Fed with life a quenchless flame.
Then hurl'd to earth the strong man lay
Groaning his struggling soul away,
And mourn'd in vain the wretched doom
That gave him an ignoble tomb.
Then like an exhalation rose
The mingled voice of many woes,
And stifled moans of deep despair
Hung upon the labouring air,
Till one universal grave
Clasp'd at length the martyr'd brave ;
And silence on the guilty plain
Sat in undisputed reign,
Surveying from her dismal throne
The dying and the dead alone.

Thou ! whose eye of Justice reads
The volume of recorded deeds !
Thou ! whose ear receives the sound
That seeks for judgment from the ground.

And clamours, like an ocean-flood,
For the dread recompence of blood !
Thou hast mark'd the ruthless train
Who smote those bonds of life in twain,
Whose hearts of indurated stone
Remorseless heard the parting groan,
And laugh'd to scorn the sacred pray'r
Of grief and anguish and despair ;
Thou hast mark'd the daring hand
That rent fair nature's holy band,
That taught the babe an orphan's fears,
That stain'd the widow's cheek with tears,
And brav'd with desperate design
That vengeance which is surely thine.

TRANSLATION

FROM THE GREEK OF TYRTÆUS.

WHO are they who nobly stand
The bulwarks of their native land ?
They who combat, man to man,
Foremost in the battle's van ;
They whom neither flight nor fear
Startle in their stern career ;
They who die in conquering pride
By their dying comrade's side ;
They before whose wasting hand
Falls or flies the hostile band ;
That hand which ranging wide and far
Strongly rules the wave of war.
These are they who nobly stand
The bulwarks of their native land.
They die—but in the foremost line
Every warrior lies supine,
And on his mangled bosom shews
The honours of a thousand blows.

They fall—but o'er his valiant boy
Each white-hair'd father weeps for joy,
Virgin youth and awful sires
Mourn around their funeral fires,
And over their victorious bier
Their grateful country drops a tear.
What their trophies? Not alone
Piles of monumental stone,
But before a nation's eyes
Long their children's children rise,
And in successive pride maintain
The glories of the gallant strain.
Tho' beneath the turf they lie,
Their name, their virtue cannot die.
Tho' the earth enfold their clay,
Ever young and deathless they.

But what the honours and applause,
Of those who in their country's cause
From the flying battle bear
The purple triumphs of the spear?
Youth and age in eager throng
Hail them as they march along,

From their ranks the old retreat
And yield to them the envied seat ;
Honour'd by a rescued land
Distinct above the crowd they stand,
Till fading in mature decay
Their manly tresses turn to gray,
And every joy that nature knows
Soothe them to a late repose.

IMITATION

OF THE 12th ODE OF HORACE.

AD REMPUBLICAM.

AH ! woe is thee, ill-omen'd bark ! once more
Redoubling surges drift thee to the main,
Amid whose tides of gore
Warm-reeking, burden'd with unnumber'd slain,

The war-storm long hath held thee tempest-tost :

Yet rouse thee—boldly stem the wild uproar,

And dare, ere hope be lost,

Thy latest struggle to regain the shore !

Hast thou not seen him close his guardian eyes,

The pilot dear, in everlasting sleep,

Skilful to read the skies,

And track the mazes of the faithless deep ?

And now behold ! upon that deadly tide

Thine haughty Rulers, impotent to save,

Scarce stay thy shatter'd side

Against the onset of the ravenous wave.

Torn by the winds, and drooping in despair,

The crimson'd streamer of thy guilty fame

Flings only to the air

The gloomy signal or the tale of shame.

And little boots it in that exigent

While fast around increasing perils spring

To boast thine high descent

And the fam'd lineage of the Forest-king.

Thou gallant Bark ! to me for ever dear,

And dearer in thy fortune's deepest fail,

O curb thy rash career,
Nor wildly sweep, abandon'd to the gale ;
For who may say how soon yon gather'd sky
Shall on thee launch the tempest of its might,
Or the dread rock how nigh
That wrecks thy glories in eternal night ?

EPITAPH ON THOMAS LLOYD.

READER! what art thou! Gentle, meek, sincere?
 So once was he whose ashes slumber here.
 Art thou of spirit constant, patient, kind,
 Of independent heart, of active mind?
 Hast thou a soul whose quick instinctive sight
 Perceives, whose fortitude supports the right,
 Whose simple virtue shuns ambitious strife
 And builds its glory on an honest life?
 All this he was. Hast thou been taught to prize
 The boons that learning gives? He too was wise.
 Feel'st thou a noble flame within thy breast,
 Against oppressors? This man was oppress'd.
 Hast thou at peril of thy life, defied
 The foes of freedom? So did he, and died.
 His name? This humble stone is meant to say
 'Twas Lloyd. Bestow one tear, and go thy way.

1812.

SONNET.

FROM PETRARCH, 313.

MOURNING the waste of my departed days
 I wander—days when vain and worldly things,
 Drew my soul down to earth, tho' blest with wings
 To win perchance no vulgar height of praise.
 Thou, who hast marked my low and worthless ways,
 Invisible, immortal, King of Kings!
 Succour my soul in these her wanderings,
 And on her darkness turn thy gracious rays.
 So shall my life of war and storms, in death
 Peaceful and harbour'd close—life, lost and vain,
 But happy now and calm in its decline,
 If o'er what little space may yet remain
 Thy hand preside—and o'er my parting breath—
 Thou knowest well no other hope is mine.

SONNET.

FROM PETRARCH, 251.

Those eyes, my bright and glowing theme erewhile,
 That arm, that hand, that lovely foot, that face,
 Whose view was wont my senses to beguile,
 And lift me high o'er all of human race ;
 Those golden locks that flow'd in liquid grace,
 And the sweet lightning of that angel smile
 Which made a paradise of every place—
 What are they ? dust inanimate and vile !
 And yet I live. O rage ! O grief ! O shame !
 Reft of the guiding star I lov'd so long—
 A ship-wreck'd bark that drives before the gale—
 Be this the limit of my amorous song ;
 Quench'd in my bosom is the sacred flame,
 And my harp murmurs its expiring wail.

SONNET.

“ STASSI IL LAURO LIETO.”

Favour'd beyond each tree of field or grove,
 Glad and for ever green the laurel stands ;
 Not to be pluck'd but by heroic hands,
 And sacred to the Majesty of Jove ;
 No lightning-flash may smite it from above,
 No whirlwind tear it from its rooted bands ;
 Obedient to their master's high commands,
 They spare the chosen plant he deigns to love.
 So midst the tumult of this mortal state
 While thunders burst around and storms assail,
 The good man stands, with mind and brow serene ;
 In cloud or sunshine still inviolate,
 Confiding in a trust that cannot fail—
 A sacred Laurel, glad and evergreen.

SONNET.

Mortal ! at last what will it thee bestead
 To stand aloft in Fame's proud vestibule,
 When thou hast buffeted the long misrule
 Of chance and trouble, and abroad hast spread
 Thine earthly glory ? Hath it profited
 That to the brave of old a laurel weed
 The hand of Fame held forth, and did arced
 The myrtle leaves to wreathe the Poet's head ?
 Within the grave's dark cell how soon consume
 Those myrtle leaves and wreathes of vanity,
 When death's cold breath has suck'd their rich
 perfume !
 But in the blessed climate of the sky
 Thou may'st attain those flowers that ever bloom,
 And pour their fragrance thro' eternity.

SONNET.

Lo ! the world lies before thee ! look abroad,
 Thou missioner of earth's perturbed scene,
 From the high station of a mind serene,
 Unquell'd by dazzling shine, by gloom unaw'd !
 And lo ! where in majestic vision seen
 The pyramid of Virtue towers sublime,
 Its summit veil'd with clouds of unborn time,
 Freedom and Truth its stedfast base terrene.
 Gird thy scrip round thee—on the sure staff lean
 Of singleness of heart, and, daring youth !
 With steady purpose let thy steps advene
 That lofty object Freedom, Virtue, Truth.
 Then in calm death resign thy vanquish'd dust,
 And yield in humble hope thy well-achieved trust.

SONNET.

O not in fear, great Author of my days !
 I lift my voice to Thee—O not in fear !
 But as a babe within the refuge dear
 Of its fond mother's breast, its weak head lays ;
 Asks not in prayer, nor tells its thanks in praise,
 Yet finds support and comfort ever near—
 Its gratitude, a smile—its prayer, a tear,
 And still receiving gladness, still repays.
 Thus in the bosom of thy tender care
 I rest, O God ! this perishable dust,
 Silent and blessed, nor with praise or prayer
 Profane my pure unalterable trust ;
 Where'er I am, enough that thou art there ;
 Enough for me—Thou art—and Thou art just.



STANZAS.

I.

O NEVER be the will to me denied
O'er nature's sweetest scenery to rove,
Nor let me, lost in vanity and pride,
Neglect the beauties of the world I love ;
For in the lowly hut and shady grove
In life's calm vale, unknowing and unknown,
More joys and dearer pleasures shall I prove
Than those who circle mad ambition's throne,
And underneath the pomp of courtly bondage groan.

II.

And tho' amid the city's murky pile
The slave of wealth each bliss serene forego
Thro' lust of gain, O be it mine the while
High seated on the mountain's tow'ring brow
To mark the summer landscape's deep'ning glow,
Or watch the pastimes of the village green,
And listen to the streamlet's distant flow
That meets my ear the wildwood strains between,
And gaze with melting eye, and bless the lovely scene.

III.

And often to recall long-passed things
My busy thoughts in memory let me send ;
For very dear is he to me who brings
The precious likeness of an ancient friend ;
And much I love o'er scenes of youth to bend
When childhood's sports won all my tender heart :
Ah ! then does many a pang my bosom rend,
When, O my soul ! with deep and deadly smart
I think on what thou wert and see what now thou art.

IV.

Sometimes pale fashion's crowded rooms I tread,
But much I loath the bright unmeaning show
Where blind ones lead who should themselves be led;
—Be they forgiven—they know not what they do.
But man of reason and reflection, Thou
Wilt not within that place set up thy tent;
Thou for far other purposes, I trow,
Down on this sphere by thy great king wert sent,
Then shake a jingling bell and love thy merriment.

V.

Far more I choose, when Phœbe, gentle Queen,
Her pale car thro' the blue serene doth wheel,
From mirthful haunts to wander forth unseen
And when my swelling heart has room to feel,
To muse how God with mortal man doth deal
While he endureth in this low estate;
How from ill deeds he canseth public weal,
And studying deep his sacred law debate
How mean and low the proud, how impotent the great.

VI.

For dear the lore divine and sweet to learn
To trace all nature up to Nature's God ;
Far from the marts of men the step to turn
Where meek retirement holds her blest abode ;
There scan this globe, by countless creatures trod,
And all those creatures in their several sphere,
Explore those fires that all the heaven bestud,
And mark the skies and ever-varying year,
Till to the moral eye beauty and light appear.

VII.

Yes! dear to me to range o'er Nature's scene,
O'er hill and dale to wander far and wide,
And walk and gaze and meditate between
In the calm coolness of the morning tide ;
Ere from the turf the sprinkled dew be dried,
And the young sun first speeds his rapid wain,
And springs aloft, exulting in his pride ;
Then be it mine to roam the silent plain,
And with the lonely thought large commune to
maintain.

VIII.

Then thro' the cool wood's lofty colonnade
Or deep secluded valley let me roam,
And trace the grass green paths in forest shade,
Where the red wild-bee spreads his early hum,
Till to the mountain's awful height I come,
Down whose steep sides with waving heath flow'rs gay
The broken torrent hurls its eddying foam,
And dashes high in air its glittering spray,
Bestreak'd with rainbow dyes by the bright Lord
of day.

IX.

Yet ere along that tall hill's side I rove,
First let me mark with no unpleasing care
Where many a little nursling of the grove
Lifts its soft foliage to the morning air ;
For sweet the pleasure that their form so fair
Into the soul transfuses—primrose pale,
The cowslip's hue of delicacy rare,
The purple thyme, and Lily of the Vale,
And the rich-scented rose that loads the lingering gale.

X.

And let the theme of Bards, the daisy pied,
That bows beneath the foot her modest head,
And clothes full many a field in flow'ry pride,
In bardic lore be aye remembered ;
The violet's bashful beauties too, that dread
The sun's intrusive ardour—emblem meet
Of the fair tenant of the lowly shed,
Who far from scenes where care and troubles beat,
Devote to heav'n and peace her sanctified retreat.

XI.

Now up the path that gently winds along,
By mountain flocks with frequent footstep worn,
Either when sooth'd by shepherd's simple song
They climb the headland's height at early morn,
Or at the summons of the eve return,
When from the teeming west with cloudy hand
Sad night draws forth her canopy forlorn,
With slow and measured step my course I bend,
And the bleak fern-clad hill in thoughtful mood
ascend.

XII.

There as the rouser of the mountain roes,
His dogs gray-bounding in the mists of morn,
With horn and hound their paths of wind pursues,
O'er moor and moss and wilderness forlorn,
He views the mound, where oft the branching horn
Or sword that once has dar'd its thousand foes,
From the dark dungeons of the grave upturn,
All mouldering round, the hallow'd spot disclose
Where by their three gray stones the brave of old
repose.

XIII.

They with the Lion-hearted chief of yore
Once pledg'd, perchance, their knighthood on the
rood,
To plant their banner on the renegade shore
Of Salem, chronicled in the book of God,
And in those paths that once their Saviour trod
To smite the Paynim's scymetar'd array;
But past their day of strength!—Their knee is bow'd,
Their haughty head is humbled!—Wrapt in clay,
They sleep the sleep of death, where their forefathers
lay.

XIV.

With slow descent from scenes like these I go
Where nature revels in her wild attire,
And thron'd majestic on the mountain brow,
Spreads the broad lake or bids the peak aspire,
Her milder sweeter beauties to admire.
To view the woodland range, the fruitful plain,
Where peace and banish'd happiness retire,
The latest relics of their rule maintain,
And spread their last faint beams amongst the sons
of men.

XV.

Lost to the world and to the world's low wrath
There may the friend of nature love to stray,
While flow'rs of pleasure strew his onward path,
And music pours her soul from every spray;
His burthen'd heart shall cast its cares away,
Hang o'er the beauteous scene it loves so well,
And still as gently sinks the closing day,
Within his hallow'd breast shall sweetly swell
Feelings without a name and thoughts he cannot tell.

XVI.

To him, the cliff sublime, and mountain mass,
That to the heav'ns their tow'ring steepness raise,
The rural prospect's pure and simple grace,
The changing seasons, summer's fiery rays,
Or sultry autumn's rich and mellowing blaze,
The smile of spring, or winter's sour disdain,
Each a new page of Nature's book displays,
Whence his enraptar'd mind may well attain
A profit nothing mean and more than worldly gain.

XVII.

Thence, soaring high on meditative wing,
Unearthly regions shall his soul explore,
And to the song of chaunting seraphs sing,
Who utter praise till time shall be no more ;
For a short season to that heavenly shore
His spirit, wishful there to dwell, shall fly,
And scorning this low spot to visit more,
Fain would her deathless energies employ
In lauding him above to all eternity.

XVIII.

Yes! still to thee, our Father and our King
Let the pure incense of our souls arise ;
And where so fervent shall that homage spring
As in thine own great Temple of the skies,
While all around thy good creation lies,
And all thy bounties in thy works we see ;
There teach our spirits early to be wise,
That thou art in all things, and all in thee,
That in thy wisdom Thou hast caus'd them all to be !

1805.

TO RUSSIA.

THOU wide-ruling Queen ! whose extended domain
Encircles the uttermost Pole,
Where the storm and the merciless hurricane reign
And the thunders incessantly roll ;
O thou ! who for ages in darkness wert lost,
Of existence unconscious, and dead to renown,
While the souls of thy people were cold as thy frost,
Content on the seas of oblivion tost
To be drifted inglorious down.

Tho' deep were thy slumbers and dark was the night
That veil'd thine ineffable blaze,
Thou didst burst in an instant, O Russia, to light,
And the wide world look'd on with amaze.
In splendor majestic, and innocent state,
Midst the nations it saw thee triumphantly tow'r,
Thou didst mingle thy voice in the awful debate,
The weak gather'd under thy wing, and the great
Wither'd up at the sight of thy pow'r.

Ye men of the desert ! Brave sons of the North,
Who rush like your wolves to the fight,
O stretch the dread arm of your puissance forth
And awaken your slumbering might !
From your regions of darkness and ice-fetter'd lands,
With the mantle of winter for ever embrown'd,
Let the outcries of Liberty summon your bands,
For the pray'r of the righteous shall strengthen
 your hands,
And your blood shall cry out from the ground.

And sweet o'er the moss-cover'd graves of your dead
Shall hymns of thanksgiving arise,
And posterity's blessings shall hallow the bed
Where the queller of tyranny lies.
Like the tempest that buffets the mountainous wave
Roll dauntlessly on the fair ranks of your pride,
Your array the last hope of the long-shackled brave,
Your leader the Being who only can save,
The Ruler of Battles your guide.

1806.



F. I. N. I. S.

Printed by Taylor, 5, Lamb's Conduit Passage.



